

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3426

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USBERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 19631

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, US, WB, GW

SUBJECT: FRENCH AMBASSADOR WORMSER'S VIEWS ON BERLIN
AND FRG/ALLIED RELATIONS

1. MRS. STOESSEL AND I WERE INVITED TO LUNCH NOVEMBER 16 BY FRENCH AMBASSADOR AND MME. WORMSER. MR. DE BOISSIEU, FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BONN GROUP, AND HIS WIFE WERE ALSO PRESENT. LUNCHEON CONVERSATION WAS LARGELY SOCIAL AND NON-SUBSTANTIVE, BUT FOLLOWING LUNCH AMBASSADOR WORMSER AND BOISSIEU TALKED WITH ME SEPARATELY ABOUT BERLIN.

2. WORMSER SAID THAT HE BELIEVES THERE ARE BASICALLY TWO TENDENCIES IN GERMAN THINKING ABOUT BERLIN. THE ONE TENDENCY AMOUNTS IN PRACTICE TO IGNORING THE ALLIED POSITION IN WEST BERLIN AND SUPPORTS DIRECT DEALINGS BETWEEN WEST BERLIN AND THE GDR. WHILE THIS MAY SEEM TO SOME TO HAVE PRACTICAL APPEAL, IT IS VERY DANGEROUS AND LEADS IN THE DIRECTION OF ESTABLISHING WEST BERLIN
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AS A SEPARATE ENTITY, THUS PLAYING ENTIRELY INTO

SOVIET HANDS.

3. THE OTHER TENDENCY, WORMSER SAID, REPRESENTS A HARD LINE ON WEST BERLIN. PROPONENTS OF THIS POLICY SEEM ALMOST TO SEEK PROVOCATION AND CONFRONTATION VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIETS. SUPPORTERS OF THIS TENDENCY CLAIM RIGHTS FOR THE FRG IN BERLIN WHICH ARE NOT SUPPORTED BY THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT. WORMSER COMMENTED THAT THE VAN WELL ARTICLE IS AN EXAMPLE OF THIS TYPE OF THINKING. HE ALSO MENTIONED "LAENDER" MEETINGS IN BERLIN AND THE IDEA OF LOCATING THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION THERE AS MATTERS PUSHED BY THOSE ADVOCATING A "TOUGH LINE". WORMSER CLEARLY FELT SUCH ACTIONS WERE MISTAKEN.

4. IN GENERAL, WORMSER SAID HE WAS OF THE VIEW THAT THE SOVIETS HAD BEHAVED FAIRLY CORRECTLY ABOUT WEST BERLIN. WHEN HE SAW ABRASIMOV, HE ALWAYS HAD ONE OR TWO ROUTINE THINGS TO COMPLAIN ABOUT, BUT ABRASIMOV ALWAYS HAD A LONG LIST OF POINTS. UNFORTUNATELY, WORMSER SAID, MANY OF THEM HAD VALIDITY.

5. WORMSER FINDS GERMAN ATTITUDES ABOUT BERLIN "CHAOTIC" AND HE EXPOUNDED AT LENGTH ON THE CONFUSION AND CONTRADICTION NATURE OF GERMAN POLITICAL VIEWS - SOMETIMES HELD BY ONE AND THE SAME PERSON - REGARDING BERLIN.

6. OF COURSE, WORMSER SAID, WHATEVER BAD RESULTS MAY COME FROM PURSUING ONE OR THE OTHER COURSE OUTLINED ABOVE, THE FRG WILL EXPECT THE WESTERN ALLIES TO STEP INTO THE BREACH AND CORRECT THE SITUATION.

7. BOISSIEU SPOKE BRIEFLY ABOUT THE BONN GROUP, COMPLAINING THAT THE FRG REPRESENTATIVE OFTEN DID NOT KNOW THE ACTUAL SUBSTANCE OF FRG POLICY CONCERNING BERLIN. BOISSIEU THOUGHT THAT THE WESTERN AMBASSADORS DEALING WITH STATE SECRETARY GEHLHOFF MIGHT BE A MORE USEFUL LEVEL FOR SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS REGARDING BERLIN THAN THE BONN GROUP. WORMSER DEMURRED AT THIS, CONFIDENTIAL

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HOWEVER, SAYING THAT HE FOUND GEHLHOFF ALSO WAS GENERALLY UNINFORMED ABOUT MAJOR FRG POLICY TRENDS CONCERNING BERLIN.

8. WORMSER CONCLUDED HIS GLOOMY REVIEW BY SAYING THAT HE EXPECTED BERLIN WOULD CONSTITUTE A SERIOUS AND INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT PROBLEM BETWEEN THE WESTERN ALLIES AND THE FRG OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

9. COMMENT: WHILE FAMILIAR WITH THE CONTINUING FRANCO-GERMAN DIFFERENCES ON APPROACHES TO INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS, I WAS STRUCK BY THE INTENSITY OF WORMSER'S CRITICISM OF THE GERMANS AND HIS UNCRITICAL VIEW OF THE

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SOVIETS. THERE WAS ALMOST NO INCLINATION ON HIS PART TO ATTRIBUTE ANY PART OF THE BLAME FOR BERLIN CONTROVERSIES TO MOSCOW.

10. I REALIZE THAT WORMSER IS A STAUNCH DEFENDER OF THE WESTERN POSITION IN HIS DEALINGS WITH THE SOVIETS, AS REFLECTED IN THE ACCOUNTS OF HIS MEETINGS WITH ABRASIMOV. WHAT CAME THROUGH, THEREFORE, WAS AN ATTEMPT ON HIS PART EARLY IN MY STAY IN BONN TO ELICIT MY COOPERATION IN PURSUING A TOUGHER LINE TOWARD THE GERMANS IN THE BONN GROUP. THIS WOULD BE CONSISTENT

WITH THE POLICY THE FRENCH APPEAR TO BE FOLLOWING IN THEIR BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH US HERE AT BONN GROUP LEVEL AND ALSO IN THE FREQUENT BILATERAL APPROACHES BY THE QUAI TO EMBASSY PARIS.

11. IN HIS BASIC ANALYSIS OF THE INCONSISTENCIES IN GERMAN POLICY TOWARD BERLIN, WORMSER IS OF COURSE
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CORRECT. WE HAVE SEEN PAST EXAMPLES OF GERMAN INSISTENCE ON CONCLUDING A PARTICULAR ARRANGEMENT FOR THE SAKE OF PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENTS, WITHOUT ADEQUATE REFLECTION ON POSSIBLE LONG-RANGE CONSEQUENCES TO THE ABILITY OF THE ALLIES TO MAINTAIN UNIMPAIRED THEIR LEGAL POSITION IN BERLIN. HE SEEMS TO GO BEYOND THIS, HOWEVER, IN CALLING FOR A PERFECTIONIST APPROACH WHICH IN THE REAL WORLD IS UNLIKELY TO BE ACHIEVED.
STOESSEL

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